(d) The quality of telecom service is monitored by the Telecom, Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). They have taken the following steps in this regard:—

(i) issue of Quality of Service (QoS) regulation in July, 2002 for basic and cellular services. This regulation lays down benchmarks for various QoS parameters.

(ii) Monitoring QoS parameters of all cellular operators on quarterly basis.

(iii) Appointing an independent agency to audit QoS parameters of all operators and conduct survey to measure the customer satisfaction. the result of this survey are widely published. The deficiencies are highlighted to the published reports and operators are asked to explain the reason for the same.

(iv) Taking up the consumer complaints of generic nature with the service providers for their redressal.

BSNL and MTNL, constantly monitor the network performance and take necessary measures to provide good quality service. They have opened new customer care centres and call centres to enable quick redressal of customer grievances.

Impact of telecom traiffs increase on I.S.Ps.

929. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the increase in telecom tariffs as announced by TRAI, would affect the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) as well as the internet users;

(b) the existing average cost per hour for surfing the net through a dial-up connections; and

(c) the average cost per hour for surfing the net through a dial-up connection after the revised rates as announced by TRAI come to be effective from April, 2003?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) 24th Amendment to Telecommunications Tariff Order (TTO), 1999 issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) specifies pulse duration of 120 seconds for local calls in Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN). This pulse duration will also be applicable for Internet dial up connections. However, TRAI has also specified reduced dial up charges for offpeak hours to be provided to Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The tariffs announced by TRAI are in the form of a Standard Tariff Package and the operators are also permitted to offer Alternative Tariff Packages.

(b) The Dial up Internet charges consist of two components *i.e.* the PSTN component (charges for local calls) and the Internet usage charge. As per the existing rate during peak hours, the average cost per hour is PSTN component of Rs. 24/-plus Internet usage charge as applicable (which varies from Operator to Operator).

(c) As per the revised pulse duration announced by TRAI, the average cost per hour during peak hours will be PSTN component of the Internet dial-up access of Rs. 36/-plus Internet charge as applicable (which varies from Operator to Operator).

Refund of security money

930. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the norms for refund of security money in cases of surrendered telephones;

(b) whether refund is not made within a stipulated time;

(c) if so, whether a lot of applications are pending in Delhi;

(d) if so, how many cases are pending under the Idgah Telephone Exchange since 2002, till date;

(e) by when these pending applications would be cleared so as to enable the applicants to get their hard-earned money back; and